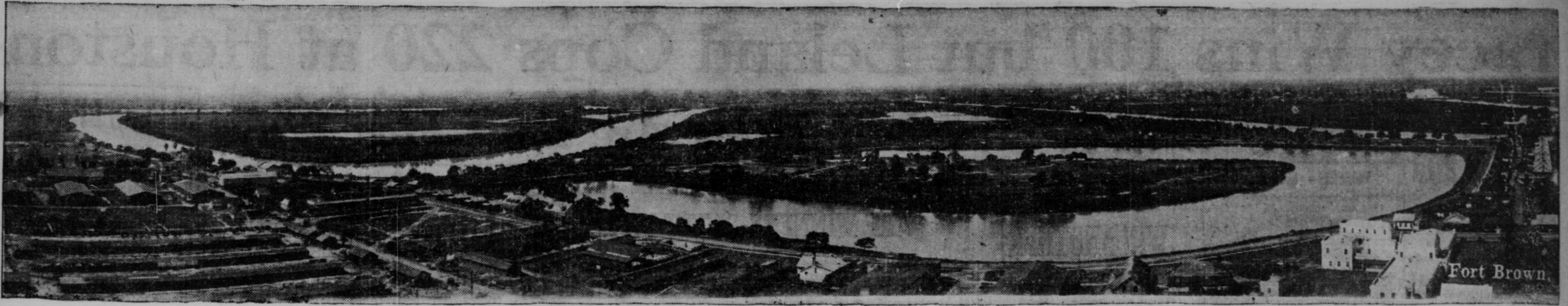


Hectic Bandit Days Which Started Close Friendship Between Sister Cities Pictured



A sweeping bird's-eye view of Fort Brown, scene of numberless raids and battles, and which played a prominent part in the bandit troubles of 1913-1915. Thousands of soldiers were stationed here, and others were scattered over the city, and even in the outskirts. During the recent troubles, no direct raids were made on the fort, but battles were fought immediately across the river in Matamoros, seen in the background.

Herald Writer Gathers Data Telling of Stirring Time

By JACK RUTLEDGE

"Keep your light out tonight. The bandits are but a few miles outside of the city limits, and are planning to attack Brownsville when it is dark."

"The West Brownsville school is a dangerous place to allow the children to attend. It is too close to the light and water plant, which is always raided first."

"How many thousand soldiers are stationed here?"

"Keep off the Military road. It's too close to the river, and the bandits will get you."

"I saw two men killed this afternoon. Shot through the head."

Such remarks, warnings, and questions were common in Brownsville and the lower border not many

years ago. Thousands of native Valley residents remember the bandit

trouble on the border, and the bloody fights between wandering

bands of plundering, murdering bandits and the Texas Rangers.

The Rangers were later aided by militia and regulars.

Natives can tell gory tales of the days of the bold border bandits.

They can tell of a day when between fifteen and twenty dead, bloody and disfigured men were

stretched out in the city market, with files swarming around them.

Dead Are Buried

They can tell of fights in Matamoros where the dead were left

where they had fallen, and how thieves, during the night, would cut

fingers from them in order to obtain rings and other jewelry.

They remember when the dead and dying were so numerous after one of the battles that none were

buried decently, but all were piled in a huge pyramid and burned, the stench penetrating for miles.

They tell stories of how citizens from Brownsville used to climb onto the roof of the old Miller hotel and

watch the fights from there, dodging occasional spurts of cement and brick when a bullet would hit and scatter it.

They recall the days when everyone carried a gun for protection, and tell of the nights when men of the families stayed awake all night

and slept in the front yard, guarding their women and children from possible attacks.

The rumble of artillery, the clatter of horses as the cavalry dash to a fight, the thump-thump of the marching feet as the infantry follow them at the double-quick—these are all memories retained by native border citizens.

It is best to start at the beginning, and tell the story in chronological order.

The trouble began in the center of another nation, hundreds of miles away.

Printed History Recounted

Frank Cushman Pierce, in his "Brief History of the Lower Rio Grande Valley," tells of the origin of the trouble as follows:

"On February 9, 1913, the students at the Chapultepec Military Academy rushed through the streets of Mexico City, headed by Mondragon, an erstwhile professor in the military school and a man of some note as a soldier."

They liberated Felix Diaz and Bernardo Reyes and then attacked the National Palace in which Madero was housed. Through treachery, Madero was taken captive, Bernardo Reyes being killed in one of the melees.

"On the 19th, Gen. Victoriano Huerta, an old comrade of Gen. Porfirio Diaz, was proclaimed president of Mexico. On the 22nd, Madero

and Pino Suarez, one of his cabinet officers, were assassinated while being taken, as alleged, to the penitentiary for safe keeping.

"Immediately the fire of revolt broke out, the reformers anticipating a return to the much hated system of spoils which the party called Cientificos had so successfully maintained during Diaz later days.

"Gen. Venustiano Carranza, at one time the governor of the state of Coahuila, immediately called to arms all those who might believe in pure constitution and in reforms as set out by Juarez. His party assumed the name of Constitutionalists. Carranza went to Piedras Negras whence he directed his campaign.

"On February 16, 1913, the Sunday following the revolt against Madero in the City of Mexico, the garrison of regulars at Matamoros renounced its allegiance to Madero, and the partisans of Diaz immediately assumed the reins of government of that city, pronouncing for General Felix Diaz.

"At once those who were outspoken Maderistas were imprisoned.

Bandits Cross Border

"On February 20, the Matamoros revolutionaries realized that funds must be available to pay off the troops, which had become restless and exacting."

There is a very good beginning. A nation in revolt, citizens in arms, and a large army, furnished with all the necessities of war, restive and unsatisfied. No centralized power—no power at all, in fact, to keep peace.

A leader, here, leader there, everyone with guns and shells mixed with the natural Latin love of excitement and warfare, and the natural result was uncontrollable bandit companies, pillaging, raiding, plundering, murdering.

It is not to be expected that the illiterate bandits would respect a mere narrow strip of water—the Rio Grande—as a boundary to their field of activities.

They began to cross into the United States.

And then the fun began.

The American consul, Feb. 24, 1913, appealed to the sheriff of Cameron county, in Brownsville, for aid. The sheriff in turn wired Governor Colquitt stating that the Mexicans were about to start a reign of terror and pillage. (The consul had denied his part in this, but as he had very little to do with the final outcome, his denial or affirmation is insignificant.)

Gov. Colquitt wired back the next morning that several units of the state militia were then enroute and would arrive in Brownsville during the day.

Colquitt was a red-blooded American, with nerve and "intestinal fortitude" sometimes sadly lacking in present day politicians. He added in his wire that if any American subject was molested in the raid, he would invade Mexico!

Troops Arrive

True to his word, the troops arrived—four companies of Texas militia and 8 Texas Rangers ready for action.

The men remained until late in July, when they returned to their homes.

In April of the same year Lucio Blanco and a party of followers traversed the state of Nuevo Leon and appeared on the Sota la Marina, where they recruited additional troops and headed for San Fernando, 90 miles south of Matamoros. He took possession of the place, capturing 600 horses which the government had been concentrating for shipment.

Moving swiftly, he swooped down upon Reynosa (across from the town of Hidalgo, in Hidalgo county) and with a small loss of life on his side, captured the town. It is reported that the Federals lost 21 killed, as many more wounded and many captured.

On May 10th Blanco, after executing 12 Federal prisoners who had refused to join his forces, and an American, Juan Alama, who had served with Roosevelt's Rough Riders in the Cuban campaign, marched on Matamoros.

Matamoros residents fled to Brownsville, the Federal troops and a number of volunteers remaining.

In the past, it seems that Brownsville and Matamoros citizens made it a habit of crossing the river for safety. If Brownsville was in danger, Matamoros would harbor the fugitives, and if Matamoros was about to be attacked, the Mexicans would dash to this side of the Rio Grande for safety.

Late in May Blanco marched upon Matamoros.

Gen. James Parker arrived in Brownsville from San Antonio around the same time.

Fierce Battle

Blanco camped at Las Rucas, 5 miles south of Matamoros, and assailed the city June 3, 1913. The battle was fierce, but the rebels succeeded in capturing the city late on the day of the 4th.

At 6 p. m. of the 4th of June, Blanco executed approximately 30 prisoners, among them being several boys between the ages of 14 and 16.

Blanco asserted that they had raised the flag of truce and had

then betrayed it, firing on his men when they approached.

Timidity on the part of the American government began to show its head when Blanco started to dominate Matamoros, robbing Americans openly. One man was robbed of merchandise and cash totaling \$100,000 because he had not paid a tax of \$150. Blanco, ruling a territory including Matamoros and Reynosa about the size of a Texas county, ignored the American government.

He directed his shafts of venom and exaction of tribute against all foreigners.

His forces were estimated at around 1200 men, and his losses in the few battles he had fought between 250 and 400. Federals, in the battle of Matamoros, had lost 69 men.

Washington Silent

Gov. Colquitt was equal to the occasion, asking and demanding that a portion of the 25,000 Federal soldiers mobilized in Texas be sent to Brownsville to relieve the tension.

Washington ignored him, and in disgust he ordered Texas militia to Brownsville. Following this act, Federal troops were moved to the border, at one time there being more soldiers in Brownsville than civilians.

"The Carranzistas (Blanco's men re-inforced) remained in Matamoros in peaceful possession until March 1915, but in the interim sanguinary conflicts were almost daily occurrences throughout the republic, the principal scene of battle being northern Mexico. During the periodical combats along the border of Texas and New Mexico and Arizona, more than 20 American men and women were struck by bullets from the Mexican side," says Mr. Pierce.

The American government finally acted, and sent warships to Tampico and Vera Cruz under Admirals Fletcher, Badger and Mayo. This, however, did not relieve the situation on the border materially.

The campaign was successful in the interior of Mexico, and Gen. Huerta abdicated, and sailed away from Mexico August 15, 1914.

Carranza was recognized as president of Mexico.

With the advent of Carranza as chief of the nation, a rebel, destined to become one of the most colorful in Mexican history, Pancho Villa, began his work of raiding, planning rebellions, and tangling things up in general.

On March 27, 1915, Gen. Jose Rodriguez, a Villista commander, began an attack on Matamoros, which was defended by Gen. Emeliano Nafarrete and Col. Procopio Elizondo.

Wounded in Brownsville

Trenches had been dug by Federal troops, and the Villistas charged them, braving machine gun fire, which killed 250 men. Many more than this were seriously wounded, and 232 were brought to Brownsville and cared for until they were able to travel again. They were then taken to Laredo and turned over to the Villa forces in northern Mexico.

During the battle not more than 12 were killed and 10 wounded.

Then began the daring raids on American farms, small towns, railroads and travelers.

A band of 20 Mexicans were seen near Los Indios in May 1915, and drove off a large number of cattle. Thirty deputies and officers joined in a chase but were unable to apprehend the bandits.

Bernard Boley, a young American was killed July 17, near the north line of the county.

Nils Peterson, July 12, was forced by a band of 11 armed Mexicans to open his store south of Lyford and furnish them with provisions.

Lorenzo and Gorgonio Manriquez were killed July 23 by deputy sheriffs at Mercedes headgates and in

the town of Mercedes respectively.

Railroad Burned

The railroad bridge south of Sebastian was burned July 25 in an attempt to wreck the train, which was warned in time.

Private G. W. McGuire, 12th cavalry, was killed in a skirmish August 2.

A. L. Austin and his son Charles, Sebastian, were captured by bandits and shot. Another youth, named Millard, was also captured but allowed to escape.

A band of men shot and wounded Sonny Huff 12 miles from Brownsville, August 7.

A total of five outlaws were killed and others were badly wounded in a battle 70 miles north of Brownsville when a force of sixty bandits tangled with some cavalymen and rangers under Sheriff Vann, Capt. J. M. Fox, Adjutant Gen. Henry Juchings, and Capt. H. L. Ransom.

During the battle Gordon Hill, Sam Robertson and 3 others arrived on a gasoline truck from Harlingen in time to assist in the battle.

A railroad bridge 12 miles north of Brownsville was burned August 20.

A story is told of how a Mexican recognized a benefactor and saved his life during one of the raids.

A band of 30 armed Mexicans appeared at the second lift pumping plant of the Los Fresnos canal company about 14 miles north of this city and 6 miles east of San Benito.

They took as prisoners a Mr. Dodd, Mr. Smith and Mr. Donaldson, with intent to execute them. They marched their prisoners to an old resaca and there shot Smith and Donaldson through the head and body. They meant to shoot Dodd, but one of the men remembered that he had aided a Villista who had been wounded in the Matamoros battle, and Dodd's life was spared.

Ears Cut Off

A gruesome incident occurred September 24, 1915. During a battle, in which one American, Private Henry Stubblefield, was killed and Pvt. Kennedy injured, a soldier by the name of Richard J. Johnson was captured by Mexican bandits.

First, Johnson's ears were cut off, and then his head decapitated, his head being displayed on a pike later.

Kennedy defended himself against 50 bandits after Stubblefield was killed, waiting for reinforcements that finally arrived and saved his life.

The bandits were routed and several killed.

On Oct. 18 the southbound St. L. B. & M. passenger train was derailed six miles north of Brownsville by 60 Mexican bandits who had drawn all the spikes and fishplates connecting two parallel rails. With a strip of barbed wire fence, wrapped in the hide of a cow they had recently killed, the bandits bulled the rails from under the train as it sped past.

On the train were John Kleiber, Dr. S. C. McCain, Harry Walls and others well known in Brownsville. Three soldiers, McBee, Brashear and Laymond, were approached and shot at, the McBee being instantly killed, the other two surviving.

Friendship Engendered

The engineer, H. H. Kendall, died with his hand on the throttle, planned beneath his cab and scalded to death. R. Woodall, fireman, was painfully burned.

By 10 o'clock the next morning

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7 bandits had been captured and 4 of these were executed by the rangers.

A list of the atrocities and outrages committed by bandits during those hectic days could continue for pages, the dead mounting into large figures, both Americans and Mexicans.

The situation was finally under control, and the bandits, finding themselves unwelcome on either the Mexican or the American side of the river, vanished, or returned to a more peaceful life. Since their early bandit troubles were mutual, the friendship now existing between Matamoros and Brownsville people is seen to have had an early start.

Things were quiet at last, troops were allowed to return to their original camps, and life settled down to a dull routine.

The Valley began to grow rapidly, and the country, young as it was, soon forgot the bloody days of strife and conflict.

Hundreds are still living here who recall the days vividly... but they don't talk about them much.

Raymondville Plant

Manufacturing Ice

(Special to The Herald)

RAYMONDVILLE, April 5—Saturday, another new business opened its doors in Raymondville, the Raymondville Ice Plant, owned and operated by R. H. Hill and J. B. Morton of Harlingen and Brownsville. The new ice plant will be managed by Kirk Holdsworth. Ice will be manufactured from pure distilled water and the plant will have a capacity of thirty tons.

The first cake of ice was made Saturday morning and contained a large basket of flowers and was purchased by the First National bank and placed on display in front of the bank.

The plant was opened for the inspection of visitors at ten o'clock in the morning and all day there was a steady stream of interested friends looking over the various steps in the manufacture of ice. Refreshments were served during the day and special prices were made on all ice sold.

COULDN'T TELL A LIE

"You seem to have plenty of intelligence for a man in your position," sneered a barrister, cross-examining a witness.

"If I wasn't on oath, I'd return the compliment," replied the witness.—Tit-Bits.

RAYMONDVILLE ONIONS MOVE

Truck Loads Being Made Ready for Shipment Over Nation

(Special to The Herald)

RAYMONDVILLE, April 5—The onion movement has started full swing in Raymondville and vicinity and hundreds of acres of onions have been pulled and are waiting for the clippers and packers. Truck load after truckload are passing

through Raymondville to the government inspector and are then being loaded into the long line of refrigerator cars ready to be shipped to all part of the United States.

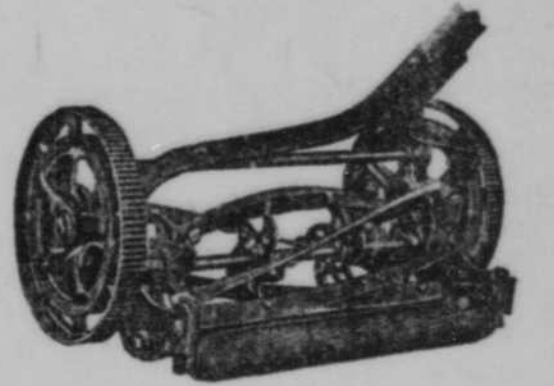
The first solid car of the onions moved out of Raymondville last week, the first being shipped by P. J. Williams, San Perita.

Today the price was good, \$1.75 to \$2.50 per crate and the report is that the market is looking up and the price will be better for a few days.

GOOD INVESTMENT

Saxophonist: I wish I had money and I would never play another note on the saxophone.

Neighbor: I wish I had money—I would give it to you.—Pares Gates, Everdon.



COME IN AND SEE our shipment of 1930 high-grade Timken and Ball Bearing Lawn Mowers. These are in sizes 16-18 and 20 for immediate delivery. Every lawn mower bought from us after Jan. 1930 will be sharpened

Free of Charge for One Year

We will accept your old mower in trade on a new one. We have a complete set of spare parts on hand for all makes and will repair your old one and make it operate like new. Call on us.

T. J. ROMMER

WELDING AND LAWNMOWERS

Phone 722 Rear of Miller Hotel on 13th St.

PLANTGARD

Increased profit at small expense—all Tomato and Bean Acreage needs your attention NOW.—A thorough dusting with PLANTGARD will eliminate Blight and Mildew in the beans, worms on tomatoes and help hold the first blooms.

PLANTGARD is a non-arsenical dusting insecticide ready for use.

An average of 10 pounds of dust per acre will show positive results. Price, \$10 per hundred pounds.

For sale by all Valley dealers and produce shippers.

Reuter's Seed Company, Inc.

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General Valley Distributors

THE Matamoros Rotary Club

Meets every Friday One o'clock at the

MATAMOROS CAFE

MATAMOROS MEXICO

Mrs. Emma Leonard

OUR BIRTHDAY PARTY

Easter Egg Hunt for the Young Folks of Brownsville SATURDAY, APRIL 19th

EASTER EGG HUNT PRIZES

FIRST PRIZE: Golden Egg (\$5 gold piece.)
SECOND PRIZE: Silver Egg 3 silver dollars.)
THIRD PRIZE: "Nest Egg" (2 dollars.)
You may find other prizes, too, such as jackknives, baseballs, beads, etc.

It's our birthday party—and everyone is invited. We're going to hide eggs in every conceivable "nook and cranny" of Ringgold Park, and in many of the places where the eggs are hidden will be prizes really worth looking for.

Remember, it's our party—and you're all invited. Watch for further announcements.

"WE COVER THE VALLEY"

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